October 11, 2012

From: Martin Lipton, Chair, New York University’s Board of Trustees
       Ralph Alexander, Chair, Polytechnic Institute of NYU’s Board of Trustees
       John Sexton, President, New York University
       David McLaughlin, Provost, New York University

To: The NYU and NYU-Poly Communities

Re: Completing the Steps to Make NYU-Poly the University’s School of Engineering

We are pleased to share with you the news that New York University and the Polytechnic Institute of NYU have agreed to move ahead with the remaining set of steps necessary for Poly formally to become the School of Engineering of NYU.

When we announced the affiliation of the two institutions in 2008, it was with the conviction that the two institutions would be far stronger connected than either would be on its own. This decision to join NYU was a forward-looking act on the part of many at Polytechnic to put the long-term benefit of Polytechnic over shorter-term interests.

For Poly, it meant a connection to a major research university with an extensive basic science research agenda and great strength in the social sciences, humanities, and professions. For NYU, it meant the re-establishment of a capability for applied science, technology, and engineering – a capability it had not had since the closing of the Heights Campus in the early 1970s – and all the energizing benefits those disciplines would bring to its existing areas of scholarship.

And the wisdom of that partnership has been borne out. We have seen many new research collaborations between faculty; we have experienced growing involvement by students from each school with the other in a wide range of academic and co-curricular pursuits; we have been able to use NYU-Poly’s expertise in engineering education to build engineering courses into the global network; we were successful in gaining City approval for our new applied science institute – the Center for Urban Science and Progress (CUSP) – in large measure because of the strength NYU and NYU-Poly’s partnership brought to the proposal; we have a growing presence in the vibrant borough of Brooklyn; and we are able to imagine and plan for new and otherwise unachievable possibilities for scientific research and education across the University because of the presence of an engineering and technology capability.
Moreover, we have been heartened by the considerable institutional momentum that Polytechnic has made over the past four years: substantial increases in applicants for admission; improvement in academic qualifications of admitted students; success in recruiting new faculty at the top of their fields; numerous new research grants won; and the development of new and renovated academic space.

Given this progress and interaction, the time has come to set into motion the final steps of the transformation of NYU-Poly into NYU’s Polytechnic School of Engineering. We intend to move forward promptly to seek the approvals and endorsements that are required to achieve this transition, including consulting with the Faculty Senators Council and the Senate Academic Affairs Committee at NYU, the Faculty Executive Committee at Poly, and other members of the universities’ communities; conducting due diligence; and seeking applicable regulatory approvals. This process is expected to be completed sometime before the start of the 2014-15 academic year.

President Jerry Hultin has played a major role in this transition. Since he first assumed Poly’s presidency in 2005, he has remained steadfastly focused on and dedicated to Poly’s advancement. He was a key leader of the effort to build this successful partnership between the two universities. With a record of achievements at Poly and the school now poised to become NYU’s School of Engineering, Jerry is eager to take on his next challenge and new responsibilities as a Senior Presidential Fellow for New York University. To that end, Jerry has asked to take a sabbatical in order to begin to study the role of technology in delivering education and the role of innovation in enhancing economic growth and the quality of life around the world. During this time, Provost K.R. Sreenivasan will serve as Acting President, although Jerry will continue to represent Polytechnic in official functions until a new president is appointed. In addition, Sreeni will continue to chair the search committee for the next President of the Polytechnic Institute of NYU and the first Dean of Engineering at NYU’s newest School. Upon appointment of Polytechnic’s next president, Sreeni will take on a new role at NYU, working with all deans – including Polytechnic’s - - and other University leaders on long-term academic, financial, and operational strategies for the wide range of applied science, engineering and technology activities at NYU.

We offer our special thanks to Jerry, and to our many colleagues – too many to list here – across both institutions who have worked with such devotion and energy to conceive of this affiliation, bring it into being, nurture it, and bring us to this step.

We will keep you apprised of our progress as we move forward in completing this historic transition and the day when Polytechnic is officially recognized as a school of New York University.